

### REMARKS

In the office communication mailed July 9, 2007, claims 1-6 and 8-16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) given Brittan et al. (U.S. Patent No. 7,062,440) ("Brittan"). Claim 7 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) given Brittan in view of Takagi (U.S. Patent No. 6,205,420) ("Takagi"). Independent claims 1, 15 and 16 will be argued in order to effectively overcome the rejection. Thus, the Applicant respectfully traverses these rejections and respectfully requests reconsideration.

### REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claims 1-6 and 8-16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) given Brittan. Prior to addressing the merits of the Examiner's rejection, the applicant believes it would first be helpful to briefly describe and characterize the Brittan reference.

Brittan's FIG. 4 (reproduced below) provides a general overview of his speech system.

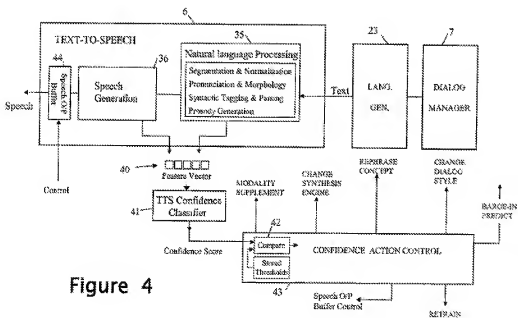


Figure 4

The Brittan application discloses a method of outputting speech through a speech synthesis engine composed of a language generator (23) and a text-to-speech converter (TTS). At each stage of the synthesis process, a TTS confidence classifier (41) can be used to modify the text to be synthesized through the assignment of a confidence score. In order to assign a confidence score, "feature values," consisting of "the degree of syntactic ambiguity in the text, the number of alternative intonation contours, and the amount of signal processing performed in the speech generation process<sup>1</sup>" are used to create a "feature vector" (40). Specifically, the feature vector (40) is used by the confidence classifier (41) to incorporate the entire series of utterances as a whole<sup>2</sup> which serve to output a confidence score<sup>3</sup>.

Brittan is therefore seen to teach the use of confidence scores to influence his synthesized audibilized text. Brittan, however, *only* teaches placing confidence scores broadly upon each *multi-word* general utterance or text. The Applicant discloses a method of placing a confidence score on *each and every* word within an utterance.

The Examiner admits that Brittan does not explicitly teach applying confidence scores to each word. However, the Examiner notes that Brittan teaches inserting pauses in front of certain words and that suggests that adding confidence scores to each word would therefore be obvious for a person having ordinary skill in the pertinent art at the time of the invention. The Applicant respectfully disagrees.

Brittan indeed teaches inserting a pause in front of certain words when there is a sufficiently low confidence score. Brittan's method of inserting a pause in front of a word, however, does *not* suggest attaching a confidence score to *each and every* word because Brittan takes each utterance *as a whole* and then outputs a confidence score based on the entire utterance. In turn, the pause is only inserted after a confidence score is calculated from an entire utterance as a whole. Thus, inserting a pause using Brittan's method does not suggest assigning a confidence score to any particular word as the latter is different than, and distinct from, the specific enabling description provided by Brittan.

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<sup>1</sup> Brittan at column 5, paragraph 57-60.

<sup>2</sup> Brittan at column 6, paragraph 59-64.

<sup>3</sup> Brittan at column 5, paragraph 57-66.

Therefore, although Brittan's suggestion of placing a pause in front of a word may be facially similar to the Applicant's use of a pause, in substance the two approaches differ considerably. Brittan teaches, and *only* teaches, the determination of a confidence rating as a function of a group of words whereas the applicant specifically sets forth and requires placing a confidence score on *each and every* word. The Applicant respectfully traverses these rejections and respectfully requests reconsideration.

**Claims 1, 15 and 16**

Independent claims 1, 15 and 16 are not obvious in view of the argument above. Claims 1, 15 and 16 all recite the language of "assigning a confidence score to each word in the recognized sequence of words." This limitation is not obvious in view of the argument above. The applicant therefore respectfully submits that Claim 1, 15 and 16 is not obvious for a variety of reasons, including those expressed above.

**Claims 2-14**


Claims 2-14 are ultimately dependent upon claim 1, which claim has been shown to be allowable above. While the applicant believes that other arguments are available to highlight the allowable subject matter presented in various of these remaining dependent claims, the applicant also believes that the comments set forth herein regarding allowability of the independent claims are sufficiently compelling to warrant present exclusion of such additional points for the sake of brevity and expedited consideration.

**Conclusion**

There being no other objections to or rejections of the claims at this time, the Applicant respectfully submits that Claims 1-16 may be passed to allowance.

Respectfully requested,

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